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SUBJECT Harbor Observations - Gdynia and Gdansk

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SOURCE A member of the crew of an Italian vessel which visited Gdynia and Gdansk, Poland. He was sincere and cooperative at the interview. He was apparently well informed and did not appear to be hesitant in answering questions.

The Office of Naval Intelligence furnished the following information to CIA for IAC dissemination in accordance with paragraph 3 c of NSCID No 7, per DIO 5ND report Serial #5-C-54, 19 Jan 54, ref: (a) NIRM #18 (b) HO Chart #4197.

1. Ship's Itinerary

Port	Dates	Cargo
Kossier	31 Oct 53	--
Bues	2 Nov 53	
Port Said	3 Nov 53	
Gdansk	21 Nov 53 - 1 Dec 53	In--phosphate Out--in ballast
Gdynia	1-3 Dec 53	In--in ballast Out--coal
Civitavecchia	25 Dec 53	
Naples	11 Jan 54	

2. Security Measures and Pilotage

Informant's ship picked up a pilot and doctor at a buoy located approximately two miles offshore from Gdansk. The pilot and doctor were put on board by a pilot boat. The ship then proceeded up the Weichsel River, finally tying up at a dock located on the southeast side of Der Holm Island.

3. The ship was then boarded by a searching party composed of from 50 to 100 persons in uniform, the members of which were referred to by the informant as police. Five or six members of the party were officers armed with revolvers. Guards with machine guns were stationed on the dock adjacent to the ship. During the search, the crew was required to stay in their quarters. The ship's agent came on board with the police and talked business with the captain during the search, which was completed in approximately six hours. After that,

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passes to the crew were issued in duplicate - one to the crew member and one to the police ashore. Shore liberty was unrestricted and those going ashore could come and go as they pleased as long as they identified themselves with the proper passes. There were no unusual incidents, and none of the crew encountered any trouble ashore. Members of the crew later stated that there was nothing to do ashore except to drink and dance.

4. The guards and members of the searching party refused offers of cigarettes and liquor. Informant stated they would probably have taken both if unobserved.
5. All persons going aboard or going ashore were required to have passes, including the agent. If none remained on board too long, the Security Guard made note of it in his log. The only exception to this procedure was the Italian Consul, who was permitted to go on board and stay as long as he liked. Informant remarked that the guards and police were all very young, most of them being between 20 and 25 years of age. The pilot who brought the ship into Gdansk was between 40 and 50 years old. Informant observed many women soldiers in the area, those on guard duty carrying side arms.
6. The informant was impressed with the numerous guards on duty in the area. For example, a guard armed with an automatic weapon was stationed on each crane; also every tug board had two guards on board. While the ship was tied up at the dock, two soldiers with automatic weapons stood guard duty on board.
7. Just before the ship left Gdansk a searching party again came on board and made a thorough security examination. They appeared to be particularly looking for stowaways.
8. The security procedures in effect at Gdynia were similar to those at Gdansk.
9. Port Facilities

Informant stated there was an acute shortage of labor at both ports. The informant accounted for this by stating that there were so many Government spies and so many soldiers and guards that there were not enough people to work. He estimated that for every one person working, there were two or three persons "looking after him."

10. The workers received approximately 30 zlotys a day. Informant considered them to be very inefficient, since it took 10 days to unload the 10 thousand tons of phosphate fertilizer. At every opportunity the workers begged for food and cigarettes.
11. Informant stated that there was considerable activity in both ports. He noted incoming cargoes of fertilizer, lumber and ore. He observed no cement or fuel oil. However, informant was advised locally that a considerable number of oil tankers were coming in at various times from Constanta and the Black Sea.
12. During the ten-day period mentioned above, the unloading of the fertilizer continued day and night. The electric cranes in Gdansk, which appeared to be old German equipment, had a capacity of approximately five or six tons each. They were in good condition and there were no breakdowns. The phosphate fertilizer was discharged directly into railroad cars on the dock. Informant was advised that this fertilizer traffic was bound for Czechoslovakia. There appeared to be a shortage of railroad cars which delayed the unloading somewhat. Only a few trucks were observed in the dock area.
13. Ships Observed

Informant stated that a lot of general cargo in Gdansk is bound for the East. On the east branch of the Southeast Weichsel River, informant observed a UK merchant ship loading coal. A freighter near it (identity unknown) was discharging lumber.

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14. Near the mouth of the Weichsel River informant observed a small Soviet tug boat, which apparently was a modern type.
15. Approximately 1,500 yards east of Basin No. 10 at Gdynia, informant observed a Monitor guard ship on station. Informant said this was a "mother ship" for the various patrol craft policing the area.
16. Informant's ship, on entering Gdynia, tied up on the north side of the Swedish Quay to load coal. At the same quay due east of the ship, a UK Liberty ship was also taking on coal. Due west of informant's ship, a small ship, identity unknown, was tied up. Informant observed another small ship, identity unknown, taking on coal on the north side of the French Quay.
17. Informant observed no naval ships at either Gdynia or Gdansk. He also observed no submarines at either port.
18. General Conditions  
The informant, during his stay at Gdansk, went ashore twice, once during the day and once in the evening. He stated that Gdansk is in a "terrible condition," everything having been destroyed during World War II and nothing left. He observed no rebuilding or construction in progress. Prices were exorbitant. For example, he saw a quart of olive oil in a store window for sale at US\$150. During the period of his visit he observed only one airplane, apparently a small civilian type, which flew overhead.
19. In general, living conditions in both ports were intolerable. The towns were desolate with no traffic on the streets and no merchandise for sale in the shops. Informant observed only a few old motor cars. He was advised that even the ship's agent was not permitted to own one.

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